

**RULES  
OF  
GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
ANIMAL INDUSTRY DIVISION**

**CHAPTER 40-10-3  
RABBIT PROCESSING**

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40-10-3-.01 Sanitation Regulations  
Applicable to Rabbits Only

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1) Processing, Chilling, and Freezing:

Rabbits may be killed, skinned, eviscerated, cooled and packaged in one room, providing that the room is of such size that the killing, skinning and eviscerating can be done on hooks so spaced that sanitary processing is possible; the cooling tanks so placed that their contents are not contaminated by other processes, and the packing is done in a part of the room well away from inedible products so that no contamination of the ready-to-cook product is possible.

2) Temperatures and Procedures for Cooling Freezing Rabbits:

a) Cooling. Immediately after eviscerating and washing of rabbit carcasses, they shall be placed in a cooling tank containing running cold tap water to remove the animal heat from the carcasses. Carcasses shall not be allowed to remain in the cooling tank for longer than one hour.

b) Air Chilling. Immediately after the initial water chilling, the carcasses shall be placed in cooling racks and thereupon placed in a refrigerated cooler with moderate air movements and a temperature which will reduce the internal temperature of the carcass to from 36°F. to 40°F. or less within 24 hours.

c) Freezing.

1) When ready-to-cook domestic rabbits are packaged in bulk or shipping containers, the carcasses shall be individually wrapped or packaged in water-vapor resistant cartons or the containers shall be lined with heavy water-vapor resistant paper so as to assure overlapping of the lining to completely surround

the carcasses and to permit unsealed closure or sealing in such manner that water-vapor loss from the product is considerably retarded or prevented. The rabbit carcasses shall receive an initial rapid freezing under such packaging, temperature, air circulation, and stacking conditions which will result in freezing the carcasses solid in 48 hours.

2) Frozen ready-to-cook rabbits shall be stored at 0°F or below, with temperatures maintained as constant as possible.

d) Immediately after packing, all ready-to-cook domestic rabbits, other than those which are shipped from the plant in a refrigerated carrier, should be moved into the freezer, except that a period not exceeding 72 hours will be permitted for transportation and temporary holding before placing in the freezer providing such rabbits are held at 36°F. or below.

e) Antemortem examination of domestic rabbits is required as a prerequisite to any inspection; and such antemortem examination shall be carried out under such conditions and in accordance with such methods as may be prescribed or approved by the Commissioner of Agriculture.

*Authority Ga. L. 1956, p. 195 as amended, and p. 748 as amended, Ga. L. 1959, p. 168.  
Administrative History. Original Rule Filed on June 30, 1965.*

\* Section 2(e) Applicable only when processing exceeds 2500 rabbits annually and/or under inspection by the Meat Division of the Georgia Department of Agriculture.